

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION APPROACHES AND PERFORMANCE OF  
COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT PROJECTS: A CASE OF KIAMBU  
COUNTY, KENYA**

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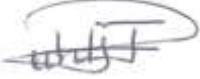
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**DECLARATION**

This project is entirely original with no submissions for credit toward a degree from any other university.

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## **DEDICATION**

This research is dedicated to my wonderful parents, husband and my two brothers whose unwavering support, love, and encouragement have been my guiding light throughout this journey. Your sacrifices, wisdom, and belief in me have inspired me to pursue my passions and strive for excellence.

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## **ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

<b>ICT</b>	:	Information and Communication Technology
<b>KATP</b>	:	Kiambu Agricultural Transformation Project
<b>KNBS</b>	:	Kenya National Bureau of Statistics
<b>NACOSTI</b>	:	National Commission for Science Technology and Innovation
<b>NGOs</b>	:	Non-Governmental Organizations
<b>SPSS</b>	:	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
<b>USA</b>	:	United States of America
<b>WEDF</b>	:	Women Enterprise Development Fund
<b>YEPP</b>	:	Youth Enterprise and Employment Programme
<b>CDD</b>	:	Community-Driven Development

## OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

**Public Participation Approaches:** Refers to the various strategies and methods used by Kiambu County to involve community members in decision-making, planning, and implementation of community empowerment projects. These approaches may include consultations, public meetings, collaborative decision-making, and participatory monitoring and evaluation.

**Community Empowerment Projects:** This involves development initiatives by Kiambu County aimed at improving the social and economic well-being of communities by enhancing their capacity to take charge of their own development. These projects often focus on areas such as education, health, infrastructure, and economic empowerment.

**Stakeholder Involvement:** This is active engagement of individuals, groups, and organizations by Kiambu County with an interest in community projects, including government agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), private sector actors, and community members.

**Communication:** This is the process of information exchange between project implementers and community members to ensure clear understanding, participation, and feedback in Kiambu County.

**Capacity Building:** This is the process of equipping community members and stakeholders by Kiambu County with the necessary skills, knowledge, and resources to actively participate in and sustain community empowerment projects.

## ABSTRACT

Public participation has increasingly been recognized as a fundamental component in the successful implementation of community empowerment projects. However, despite its acknowledged importance, there remains a significant gap in understanding the specific effects of various public participation approaches on project performance. Community projects often suffer from poor execution and lack of sustainability, largely due to insufficient engagement of stakeholders, ineffective communication strategies, and inadequate capacity building efforts. This study aimed to determine the effect of public participation approaches on the performance of community empowerment projects in Kiambu County, Kenya. The study objectives were; effect of stakeholder involvement on the performance of community empowerment projects, effect of communication on the performance of community empowerment projects, effect of capacity building on the performance of community empowerment projects in Kiambu County, Kenya. The study was guided by Stakeholder Theory and Resource Mobilization Theory. The study employed a descriptive research design. The study targeted 150 community empowerment projects currently underway in Kiambu County, involving 3,000 stakeholders. The Yamane formula was utilized in calculating sample size. A sample size of 97 respondents was achieved. Simple random sampling technique was utilized in selecting respondents. Data collection was done through semi-structured questionnaires. Pilot study was done to enhance validity and reliability of research instrument. Data collected was coded, analyzed, and presented through tables and charts. The research will uphold ethical consideration procedures where research authorizations were acquired from Graduate school-Kenyatta University and NACOSTI research license. The findings highlight that engaging stakeholders, government agencies, NGOs, and community members enhances project sustainability. Effective communication ensures stakeholders understand goals and stay engaged. Training and skill development equip community members to manage projects and foster innovation. Stakeholder involvement leverages external expertise, resources, and support, contributing to long-term success. Regular consultations and feedback mechanisms enable adaptive management, addressing challenges and aligning with community needs. Empowering communities through ongoing education and training sustains project impact. The study recommends that the government allocate resources to facilitate stakeholder engagement and implement participatory frameworks effectively. Stakeholders should collaborate with local communities to provide technical support, financial resources, and capacity-building. Promoting inclusive decision-making fosters ownership and long-term commitment, ultimately strengthening community development initiatives.

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Study

Public participation is crucial for understanding local needs and priorities, fostering a sense of ownership, and ensuring accountability. Engaging citizens in decision-making processes leads to better project outcomes and increased community support for the initiatives. It promotes transparency and accountability in development initiatives (Gichuki, Njeri & Waitherero, 2022). In the United States of America, public participation has been extensively studied, particularly in the fields of urban planning and environmental management. Research indicates that when communities are actively involved in decision-making processes, projects yield higher satisfaction and better outcomes (Arnstein, 2019). For instance, a study by Smith and Pineda (2020) highlighted that participatory budget initiatives in several USA cities resulted in tangible improvements in local infrastructure, showcasing how citizen engagement enhances project performance. However, gaps remain in understanding how different demographic variables influence levels of participation and project outcomes, leading to the need for targeted studies that address these complexities.

In Mexico, the dynamics of public participation are multifaceted, shaped by unique sociopolitical contexts. Recent studies emphasize the significant role that extensive community engagement plays in overcoming historical marginalization in rural areas (Ramirez, 2021). A notable example includes participatory projects aimed at improving local water management systems, which have proven successful in mobilizing community involvement and resources (Hernandez & Gonzalez, 2022). Despite these successes, there is evidence of varying effectiveness depending on

regional disparities and socioeconomic factors. For instance, in indigenous communities, traditional governance structures often clash with formal participatory approaches, leading to inconsistent project outcomes (Martinez & Morales, 2023). This gap in the literature illustrates the necessity of focusing specifically on methods that integrate local cultural frameworks with modern public participation strategies, an approach that could be crucial for developing effective community empowerment projects in Kenya.

In Kuwait, the concept of public participation has gained traction, particularly within the framework of sustainable development goals. Participation in Kuwait often manifests through government-led initiatives aimed at involving citizens in environmental conservation and urban development projects. Findings from Al-Awadhi et al. (2021) indicate that government transparency and citizen input significantly influence the perceived success and impact of such initiatives. However, the extent to which public participation translates into real empowerment remains inadequately explored, particularly in the context of marginalized populations within the country (Khalaf & Al-Fadhli, 2023). The apparent disconnect between public participation efforts and measurable community empowerment outcomes highlights critical research gaps.

In Nigeria, the issue of public participation is deeply intertwined with governance challenges, including corruption and lack of transparency. Research has shown that while community participation in development projects is legislated, its implementation often falls short due to a lack of political will (Bwala & Adebajo, 2022). A case study by Eze and Okeke (2020) examined participatory rural development interventions that were hindered by top-down decision-making

processes, which ultimately diminished community buy-in and project sustainability. The findings suggest that fostering genuine participatory approaches can lead to improved project outcomes; however, contextual factors such as political instability and socio-economic constraints present significant barriers. This emphasizes the need for further investigation into grassroots-level participation tactics that effectively engage communities in Nigeria and other similar contexts, including Kiambu County, to promote successful empowerment initiatives.

Finally, in Kenya, public participation is a recognized constitutional right, yet its practical implementation in community empowerment projects is fraught with challenges. Studies indicate that while laws advocate for inclusive participation, diverse cultural practices and power dynamics often inhibit effective engagement (Ochieng & Oloo, 2022). For instance, women and youth frequently encounter systemic barriers that limit their active involvement in project planning and execution (Owino et al., 2023). Research shows that the effectiveness of participatory approaches varies significantly across different Kenyan contexts, indicating a pressing need for localized studies to identify the most effective practices for community empowerment (Mugambi & Wanjiru, 2021). This study aimed to fill those gaps by systematically exploring public participation methods tailored to the specific needs and dynamics of Kiambu County, ultimately contributing to enhanced community empowerment and project performance.

### **1.1.1 Public Participation Approaches**

Public participation approaches are essential methodologies that involve engaging community members in the decision-making processes of projects that affect their lives (Rowe & Frewer, 2023). Key public participation approaches include

stakeholder involvement, communication, and capacity building. Stakeholder involvement is a cornerstone of public participation approaches, where various stakeholders including community members, local leaders, government agencies, and non-governmental organizations collaborate to define project objectives and strategies (Beierle & Cayford, 2021). This engagement ensures that the voices of those affected by community projects are heard and considered. Effective stakeholder involvement has been linked with significant improvements in project performance, as it fosters ownership and commitment among participants, making the project more likely to be sustainable in the long term (Fiorino, 2020).

Effective communication is vital public participation approach that determines the flow of information among stakeholders. Transparent, timely, and clear communication fosters trust and minimizes misunderstandings between project implementers and community members (Vangen & Huxham, 2020). Project managers reached a larger audience and guaranteed inclusive involvement by using a variety of communication platforms, including social media, community gatherings, and educational pamphlets. A research by Renn (2019) revealed that projects with robust communication strategies often report higher levels of community satisfaction and buy-in, demonstrating a clear link between communication and project performance.

Capacity building is a public participation approach that focuses on enhancing the skills, knowledge, and resources of community members to empower them in influencing project outcomes effectively (Petts & Brooks, 2021). By providing training sessions, workshops, and resources, capacity building initiatives facilitated greater community engagement in project design and implementation. Cohen and Uphoff (2020) revealed that projects emphasizing capacity building report increased

local participation and vested interest in project success, leading to more sustainable community outcomes. However, the effectiveness of capacity building programs is undermined by existing socioeconomic disparities and lack of access to resources, which limited the extent of participation among disadvantaged groups (O'Neill & Etheridge, 2022).

### **1.1.2 Performance of Community Empowerment Projects**

Project performance refers to the evaluation of a project's success in achieving its objectives within the predefined constraints of scope, time, cost, and quality (Cohen & Uphoff, 2020). Assessing the performance of community empowerment projects involves examining various factors that contribute to their success or failure. Huang and Rust (2022) indicated that community-driven projects with well-articulated scopes are more likely to achieve their intended outcomes, as they foster a mutual understanding of project goals among all stakeholders. For instance, a participatory approach to defining project scope in educational initiatives in rural areas has been shown to enhance community relevance and effectiveness, resulting in increased enrollment and retention rates (Nguyen & Wang, 2023).

Community empowerment projects have become a vital component of development strategies worldwide, aiming to enhance local capacities, foster sustainable development, and promote social inclusion. Globally, these initiatives have demonstrated mixed results, often influenced by contextual factors such as governance, funding, community participation, and socio-economic conditions. According to the World Bank (2017), community-driven development (CDD) projects have successfully improved access to basic services, with some projects reporting up to a 30% increase in household incomes and significant reductions in poverty levels in

targeted areas. For instance, in countries like India and Brazil, empowerment programs have contributed to increased community participation in decision-making processes, leading to more sustainable development outcomes (Pratt *et al.*, 2024).

In West Africa, Ghana's Community-Based Rural Development Project has empowered over 1 million households through participatory planning, increasing agricultural productivity by 15-25% and women's income by 40% (IFAD, 2022). Challenges include political instability and limited infrastructure, leading to variable performance; a meta-analysis of 50 African projects found that participatory approaches improve outcomes by 20% when combined with capacity-building, but corruption reduces efficacy in 30% of cases (Chirawu, 2019).

In Kenya, community empowerment projects have faced challenges such as limited resources, corruption, and inadequate capacity-building, which hinder their overall performance (Okech *et al.*, 2018). Despite these hurdles, some projects have shown positive results. For example, a study in Kenya reported that community-based natural resource management initiatives led to a 25% increase in household income and improved environmental conservation efforts (Ngugi *et al.*, 2019). These projects often emphasize participatory approaches, which foster ownership and accountability among community members

Timely project completion is vital in community empowerment initiatives, as it ensures that benefits are delivered promptly to those in need (Elonen & Artto, 2020). Effective public participation has been linked to enhanced time management, as engaging community members in the planning phase can lead to more realistic timelines in project execution. A study by Obi and Adebayo (2022) demonstrated that involving local stakeholders in setting timelines led to improved adherence to

schedules and reduced delays, as community insights were utilized to account for local challenges.

Cost performance assesses whether a project is implemented within the allocated budget, which is especially important for community empowerment projects that often rely on limited financial resources (Roth & Wright, 2019). Effective financial management is crucial, and studies show that employing participatory budgeting processes can enhance cost control. Engaging community members in financial planning tends to lead to more accurate budgeting and resource allocation, as local knowledge helps identify potential cost-saving measures (Fiorino, 2020). A study by Karanja, Mburu and Maina (2024) noted that participatory agricultural projects which included community input in financial decisions experienced lower costs and more efficient use of resources, enabling a broader impact.

Quality is paramount in community empowerment projects, where the legitimacy and acceptance of outcomes heavily rely on stakeholder satisfaction. Public participation approaches that prioritize community input can enhance the quality of project outcomes, as they allow for continuous feedback and adjustments during implementation (Cameron, Deb & Wong, 2022). Jiang, Meng and Gupta (2021) revealed that health initiatives that incorporate community feedback loops have been linked to improved service delivery and higher satisfaction rates among beneficiaries.

### **1.1.3 Kiambu County**

Kiambu County, situated in central Kenya, has become a hub for various empowerment initiatives aimed at fostering economic independence, social inclusion, and skill development among its residents. These projects, often spearheaded by the county government, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and international

partners, target vulnerable groups such as women, youth, and smallholder farmers. For instance, agricultural empowerment programs leverage Kiambu's fertile lands to provide training and resources, helping communities transition from subsistence farming to profitable ventures (Kiambu County Integrated Development Plan, 2022-2027). This holistic approach not only addresses poverty but also promotes sustainable development, aligning with Kenya's Vision 2030 goals.

One prominent area is economic empowerment through cooperatives and entrepreneurship. The Kiambu County Government has implemented the Kiambu Agricultural Transformation Project (KATP), which offers subsidized seeds, irrigation equipment, and market access to over 10,000 smallholder farmers, with a focus on women who constitute a significant portion of participants (Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Cooperatives, 2023). Similarly, cooperatives like the Limuru Dairy Farmers Cooperative Society empower members by facilitating collective marketing and access to microloans, resulting in increased incomes and reduced dependency on external aid (World Bank Kenya Economic Update, 2023). These efforts have been credited with boosting local economies, particularly in tea and dairy production, which are key sectors in the county.

Women's empowerment stands out as a critical focus, with programs designed to bridge gender gaps in access to resources and opportunities. The Women Enterprise Development Fund (WEDF), managed by the county, provides low-interest loans to female entrepreneurs engaged in activities such as tailoring, food processing, and retail. Evaluations indicate that beneficiaries have seen revenue growth of up to 40%, enabling them to support their families and invest in education (Kiambu County Economic Empowerment Report, 2023). Complementing this, NGOs like CARE

International run the "Empowerment for Women and Girls" initiative, which combines skills training with advocacy for gender equality, reaching over 5,000 women in Kiambu since 2020 and fostering leadership roles in community decision-making (CARE Kenya Annual Report, 2022).

Youth empowerment initiatives address high unemployment rates by equipping young people with practical skills and entrepreneurial tools. The Youth Enterprise and Employment Programme (YEEP), supported by national and local funding, delivers vocational training in fields like information and communication technology (ICT), carpentry, and hospitality, leading to job placements or startup ventures for over 2,000 participants since 2021 (State Department for Youth Affairs, 2023). Additionally, the Kiambu Innovation Hub, a collaborative effort between public and private sectors, offers mentorship and incubation for tech-based businesses, encouraging innovation and self-reliance among the youth (Kiambu County Innovation Strategy, 2022). These programs have shown a 60% success rate in sustaining enterprises, contributing to reduced youth idleness.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Public participation is increasingly recognized as a crucial component in the success of community empowerment projects, particularly in developing regions. Despite the acknowledged importance of engaging local communities in project planning and implementation, there remains a significant gap in understanding how different public participation approaches influence the performance of these projects. Previous studies have highlighted the positive correlation between public participation and project outcomes, yet they often fail to delineate the specific mechanisms through which

various participation strategies impact community empowerment (Munyiri & Karanja, 2020; Wamuyu, Mwangi, & Karanja, 2021).

In Kiambu County, where community empowerment projects are essential for addressing socio-economic challenges, the lack of tailored public participation strategies may hinder project effectiveness. For instance, a study by Ndung'u, Waweru and Karanja (2022) found that projects with minimal community involvement often faced resistance and low sustainability rates. This suggests that the traditional top-down approaches prevalent in many projects may not adequately address the unique needs and aspirations of local populations. Furthermore, while some empirical studies have explored the role of public participation in project success, they often focus on quantitative outcomes without considering qualitative aspects such as community satisfaction and ownership (Ochieng & Muriuki, 2023).

Moreover, existing literature tends to generalize findings across different contexts, which may not be applicable to the specific socio-cultural dynamics of Kiambu County. For example, research by Kamau, Mwangi and Kibet (2021) in a different Kenyan region indicated that culturally sensitive participation methods significantly enhanced project outcomes. However, this research aimed to fill this gap by examining the effect of various public participation approaches on the performance of community empowerment projects in Kiambu County, Kenya.

### **1.3 Research Objectives**

The study was guided by the following research objectives;

- i. To assess the effect of stakeholder involvement on the performance of community empowerment projects in Kiambu County, Kenya.

- ii. To establish the effect of communication on the performance of community empowerment projects in Kiambu County, Kenya.
- iii. To determine the effect of capacity building on the performance of community empowerment projects in Kiambu County, Kenya.

#### **1.4 Research Questions**

The study questions include;

- i. What is the effect of stakeholder involvement on the performance of community empowerment projects in Kiambu County, Kenya?
- ii. What is the effect of communication on the performance of community empowerment projects in Kiambu County, Kenya?
- iii. What is the effect of capacity building on the performance of community empowerment projects in Kiambu County, Kenya?

#### **1.5 Justification of the Study**

Engaging local communities in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of development initiatives ensures that projects are responsive to the actual needs and priorities of the people they intend to serve. Firstly, existing research underscores the positive correlation between public participation and project performance. A study conducted in Kwale County, Kenya, revealed that community engagement significantly enhances the effectiveness of community empowerment projects by fostering local ownership and accountability (Chirema, Nyaga, & Okoth, 2024). Moreover, previous studies have identified challenges that hinder effective public participation, such as limited awareness, cultural barriers, and inadequate capacity among community members (Muriuki & Karanja, 2019).

## **1.6 Significance of the Study**

For the government, the findings of this study are critical for refining existing policies and strategies designed to facilitate community empowerment. By examining the effectiveness of public participation approaches, the study informed government officials about which methods are most effective in engaging community members and stakeholders in project planning and implementation. This knowledge is essential for promoting good governance, enhancing transparency, and fostering accountability in public service delivery. By successfully involving communities in decision-making processes, the government ensured that initiatives are more closely aligned with the needs and aspirations of the populations they serve. Additionally, the results guided the allocation of resources toward initiatives that demonstrate the potential for impactful community engagement, thereby improving the overall effectiveness and sustainability of development projects.

Policymakers could utilize the results from this research to develop frameworks that promote inclusive participation in community empowerment projects. The study highlights specific public participation approaches, such as stakeholder involvement, communication strategies, and capacity-building efforts, that can effectively foster local engagement. By understanding the relationship between these approaches and project performance, policymakers were better equipped to create regulations and policies that support collaborative governance. This led to more effective implementation of programs that not only facilitate community development but also empower citizens to take an active role in shaping their socio-economic landscapes. Ultimately, such inclusive policy measures could strengthen democratic practices

within communities, promoting greater civic engagement and overall societal cohesion.

The importance of this study extends to the communities involved in empowerment projects, as it aims to empower them through enhanced knowledge and understanding of public participation. By elucidating the benefits of active participation, the research can encourage community members to engage more deeply in the planning and execution of projects that affect their lives. When communities understand the significance of their involvement, they take ownership of initiatives, which often leads to improved project outcomes and greater local satisfaction. The study's findings may inspire community members to advocate for their needs and priorities more effectively, thus fostering a culture of collaboration and mutual responsibility. In turn, this increased local engagement which lead to enhanced sustainability of projects, ensuring long-lasting positive impacts on the community.

For researchers and academicians, this study contributes valuable empirical data and theoretical insights to the fields of public participation, governance, and community development. By focusing on the specific context of Kiambu County, the research enhanced the existing body of literature regarding how public participation approaches affect project performance. It provides a model for future studies aiming to explore similar dynamics in different geographical or cultural contexts, thereby enriching academic discourse on community empowerment strategies.

### **1.7 Scope of the Study**

This study focuses on the effect of public participation approaches on the performance of community empowerment projects within Kiambu County, Kenya. The study

specifically delved into three primary public participation approaches: stakeholder involvement, effective communication, and capacity building. The temporal scope of the study is defined by the period from 2019 to 2024, a span of five years. This timeframe includes both the pre-pandemic and post-pandemic phases, providing a comprehensive view of public participation approaches in the face of global challenges such as COVID-19. During this period, various community empowerment projects had varied performance outcomes depending on the nature of public participation strategies employed.

### **1.8 Limitations of the Study**

The study encountered various challenges. Some respondents were non-cooperative respondents. Some community members, project stakeholders, or government officials were reluctant to participate in the study due to various reasons, such as distrust in researchers, fear of disclosing sensitive information, or general apathy towards surveys and interviews. This lack of cooperation could lead to incomplete or biased data, affecting the overall reliability of the study. To mitigate this challenge, the researcher obtained an authorization letter from the Graduate School of Kenyatta University and a Research Permit from the National Commission for Science, Technology, and Innovation (NACOSTI). These official documents served as proof of legitimacy, helping to build trust among respondents and encouraging their participation in the study.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This section presents the reviewed literature from other scholars in relation to study public participation approaches and community empowerment projects. The chapter also presents the theoretical and conceptual framework.

#### **2.2 Community Empowerment Projects**

In a study conducted by Johnson (2022), the research explored community empowerment initiatives across various states in the USA. The study employed a mixed-methods approach, targeting community members, local government officials, and nonprofit organizations involved in empowerment projects, with a sample size of 200 participants. A purposive sampling technique was used to ensure representation from urban, suburban, and rural areas. Data collection involved structured interviews, surveys, and case study analyses. The findings indicated that community-driven projects, such as neighborhood revitalization and youth empowerment programs, significantly foster local ownership and sustainable development. The research also identified challenges related to funding sustainability and inclusive participation, particularly among marginalized groups. The study emphasizes that successful empowerment initiatives require strong collaboration among stakeholders, continuous capacity-building, and tailored approaches to inclusivity to achieve long-term impact.

In a study conducted by Wabuge (2023), the research utilized a mixed-methods design to analyze community empowerment initiatives in Uganda. The target population consisted of community members, local leaders, and project implementers,

totaling 150 participants. A stratified random sampling technique was employed to ensure diverse representation across different demographic segments. Data were collected using structured questionnaires and focus group discussions. The findings revealed that active community participation significantly enhances project ownership, leading to better sustainability and outcomes. However, the study noted the challenge of effectively engaging marginalized groups within the community, highlighting a methodological gap in adequately addressing inclusivity.

Njuguna and Mwangi (2022) conducted a quantitative study in Kenya focusing on community-based health projects. Their target population comprised healthcare beneficiaries and project staff, with a sample size of 120 participants drawn using simple random sampling. Surveys were employed as the primary data collection instrument. The study found that effective communication between stakeholders led to improved project implementation and accountability. Nevertheless, it indicated a lack of qualitative insights into the participants' experiences, thereby suggesting a knowledge gap regarding the nuanced perspectives of community members involved in these health initiatives.

A study by Mutua (2021) explored capacity-building initiatives within community development projects in Tanzania. Utilizing a sequential explanatory design, the research engaged 200 participants, with a purposive sampling approach targeted towards community leaders and active project beneficiaries. Data were collected through interviews and focus group discussions, which provided in-depth insights into participants' experiences. The findings revealed that training programs significantly enhanced local capabilities, boosting project effectiveness. Nonetheless, the study highlighted limited attention to how different capacity-building approaches might

variably affect project outcomes, indicating a contextual gap in understanding the diversity of empowerment strategies employed.

Otieno (2023) examined sustainable livelihoods projects in South Africa, adopting a qualitative research design to gather rich narratives from community participants. The target population included 80 participants, and purposive sampling was used to select those who had directly engaged with the projects. Semi-structured interviews served as the data collection instrument. The findings underscored the importance of grassroots involvement in shaping project goals; however, the research pointed out a gap in quantifying the relationship between participation levels and actual project effectiveness, leaving a methodological void regarding measurable impacts.

### **2.3 Stakeholder Involvement and Performance of Community Empowerment**

#### **Projects**

In a study conducted by Gonzalez, Torres and Huerta (2021), the researchers explored the impact of stakeholder involvement on the performance of community empowerment projects in rural Mexico. The research utilized a mixed-methods design, combining quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews. The target population comprised local community members and project leaders involved in various empowerment initiatives. A stratified random sampling technique was employed, resulting in a sample size of 300 participants. Data were collected using structured questionnaires for the quantitative component and semi-structured interview guides for the qualitative aspect. The findings revealed that greater stakeholder involvement led to enhanced project ownership and improved outcomes such as health and education. The study indicated that projects characterized by active engagement from community members achieved higher performance ratings

compared to those with little or no involvement. However, the study's contextual focus on rural Mexico limits the generalizability of the findings to different cultural or geographical settings, highlighting a methodological gap.

In Kuwait, Al-Qattan (2022) conducted a quantitative study examining the role of stakeholders in enhancing community empowerment initiatives within urban environments. The research employed a cross-sectional design, targeting community groups involved in various governmental and non-governmental projects. A purposive sampling technique was used to reach a sample size of 150 respondents. The primary data collection instrument was an online survey questionnaire, designed to capture participants' perceptions of stakeholder involvement and project success. The results indicated a positive correlation between stakeholder engagement and project effectiveness, particularly in terms of resource allocation and community satisfaction. The study found that projects with higher levels of intended stakeholder involvement demonstrated better sustainability indicators. Nevertheless, the methodology predominantly focused on urban populations, presenting a contextual limitation that may not adequately represent rural empowerment initiatives.

In Ghana, Mensah and Osei-Tutu (2019) undertook a qualitative study that explored the role of stakeholder engagement in the performance of community empowerment projects within the education sector. The study adopted a case study design that targeted two regions known for successful educational initiatives. A sample size of 60 participants was drawn using purposive sampling techniques, including teachers, school administrators, and local government officials. Data were gathered through in-depth interviews and focus group discussions, aiming to capture the multifaceted perspectives of stakeholders involved in educational projects. The findings revealed

that inclusive stakeholder involvement significantly enhanced project outcomes, particularly in terms of increased educational attainment and community support. However, the study lacked quantitative validation of its findings, leading to a methodological gap in assessing the broader applicability of the results.

In Kenya, Ochieng and Oloo (2022) studied the effect of stakeholder involvement on community empowerment projects in rural areas. The research utilized a mixed-methods approach, targeting community members and project implementers across multiple projects. A random sampling technique was employed, yielding a sample size of 250 participants. Data collection instruments included structured questionnaires and focus group discussion guides. The results showed that high levels of stakeholder engagement were associated with significant improvements in project outcomes like health care access and agricultural productivity. The study also highlighted that effective communication among stakeholders played a critical role in enhancing project performance. However, while the findings provide relevant insights within the Kenyan context, they do not sufficiently account for variations in stakeholder dynamics across different cultural settings, thereby indicating a contextual gap.

#### **2.4 Communication and Performance of Community Empowerment Projects**

In the United States, a study by Smith, Jones and Williams (2020) investigated the effect of communication strategies on community empowerment projects within urban settings. The research adopted a mixed-methods design, targeting community members and project managers involved in various empowerment initiatives. A stratified random sampling technique yielded a sample size of 300 respondents. Data were collected using structured surveys and qualitative interviews to capture both

quantitative data on communication effectiveness and qualitative insights into community perceptions. The findings indicated that projects utilizing clear and consistent communication strategies significantly outperformed those that did not, particularly in terms of participant engagement and satisfaction. Effective communication was shown to foster trust, increase stakeholder involvement, and enhance overall project outcomes. However, this study was limited to urban populations, which may not fully reflect the challenges of communication in rural settings, highlighting a contextual gap in understanding how communication dynamics may vary across different environments.

In Japan, Tanaka (2021) explored the role of communication in enhancing community empowerment projects in rural areas. The research employed a qualitative case study design, targeting local government officials, community leaders, and residents. A purposive sampling technique was used, resulting in a sample size of 50 participants. Data were collected through in-depth interviews and focus group discussions, aimed at understanding how communication influenced project performance. The findings revealed that effective communication practices, especially through local media and community forums, played a significant role in increasing community participation and project sustainability. Participants reported improved awareness of project goals and benefits due to consistent communication efforts. The study, however, focused solely on rural projects, limiting the ability to generalize findings to urban contexts where different communication channels may be more effective, thus presenting a contextual gap.

In India, Gupta and Sharma (2022) conducted a quantitative study examining the influence of communication on community empowerment initiatives in the

agricultural sector. The research used a cross-sectional survey design, targeting farmers and local agricultural extension workers across multiple states. A random sampling technique resulted in a sample size of 400 participants. Data were collected through structured questionnaires designed to assess communication effectiveness and project performance indicators such as crop yields and economic benefits. The study found that effective communication between extension workers and farmers significantly improved agricultural productivity and community satisfaction. Farmers who received timely information reported higher yields and financial returns compared to those with limited communication access. However, the study did not account for the diversity of communication practices across different regions, highlighting a methodological gap in understanding how cultural differences may affect communication effectiveness.

In Nigeria, Adebayo and Bello (2023) investigated the impact of communication strategies on community development programs in rural regions. The research adopted a descriptive survey design, targeting community members involved in various empowerment initiatives. Using a simple random sampling technique, the study achieved a sample size of 250 respondents. Data were collected through structured questionnaires designed to evaluate the effectiveness of communication practices in community projects. The findings indicated that projects that implemented interactive communication strategies, such as community meetings and radio broadcasts, led to significantly higher levels of community engagement and project success. Additionally, the study highlighted that poor communication often resulted in misunderstandings and project failures. Nevertheless, the research focused

primarily on rural communities, limiting the applicability of findings to urban settings where communication strategies might differ significantly.

In Kenya, Nyaga and Mburu (2024) conducted a study assessing the effect of communication on the performance of community empowerment projects in various sectors, including health and education. The study used a mixed-methods design, targeting community stakeholders, project implementers, and beneficiaries. Using a stratified sampling technique, a total sample size of 300 participants was obtained. Data were collected through both structured questionnaires and in-depth interviews. The study found that effective communication significantly enhanced project performance, with better health outcomes and educational attainment associated with clear, consistent communication between project stakeholders and community members. Interestingly, the qualitative components revealed that communication styles that resonated with local cultural norms were particularly effective in fostering greater community trust and involvement. However, the study did not comprehensively explore the impact of various communication channels, indicating a need for more nuanced analysis regarding the most effective means of communication across different contexts.

## **2.5 Capacity Building and Performance of Community Empowerment Projects**

In Canada, a study by Thompson, Kahn and Ford (2020) examined the impact of capacity building on the performance of community empowerment projects, particularly in the non-profit sector. The research employed a mixed-methods design, targeting non-profit organizations involved in community development initiatives. A purposive sampling technique was used to select 150 participants across various provinces, including project managers and community members. Data were collected

through structured surveys and semi-structured interviews to gather both quantitative and qualitative insights. The findings indicated that capacity building initiatives, such as training workshops and resource provision, significantly improved the efficiency and effectiveness of community projects. Enhanced skills and knowledge among community members led to better project outcomes, including increased participation and sustainability. However, the focus was predominantly on urban contexts, which may limit the applicability of the findings to rural or remote areas, thus presenting a contextual gap.

In Pakistan, Ahmed and Iqbal (2022) explored the effects of capacity building on community empowerment projects in rural regions, utilizing a descriptive survey design. The target population consisted of community leaders and beneficiaries involved in various developmental initiatives in the Punjab province. A simple random sampling technique was employed, resulting in a sample size of 200 respondents. Data were collected through structured questionnaires designed to evaluate the impact of capacity building programs on project performance. The study found that investments in capacity building, including skills training and leadership development, significantly enhanced community participation and project success rates. Participants reported increased confidence and effectiveness in managing local initiatives. However, the study primarily focused on one province, indicating a need for broader geographical representation that could provide insights applicable to other regions.

In South Africa, Nkosi, Mchunu and Maluleke (2021) conducted a qualitative study assessing the role of capacity building in community empowerment projects, particularly within marginalized communities. The research adopted a case study

design, targeting community organizations and project beneficiaries in urban and rural settings. A purposive sampling technique resulted in a sample size of 75 participants. Data were collected through in-depth interviews and focus group discussions, aimed at capturing the experiences and perspectives of community members involved in empowerment projects. Findings revealed that effective capacity building initiatives, particularly those tailored to local needs, improved project performance significantly. Enhanced community skills resulted in better resource management and increased stakeholder participation. Nonetheless, the focus on specific communities may limit the generalizability of the findings to other cultural or socio-economic contexts.

In Ethiopia, Belayneh and Michael (2023) investigated the effects of capacity building on community development projects using a longitudinal research design. The study targeted rural communities engaged in agricultural empowerment projects. A systematic sampling technique was applied, resulting in a sample size of 1000 respondents. Data were collected through surveys and observational methods, capturing both immediate outcomes and long-term impacts of capacity building initiatives. The results indicated that capacity-building efforts, particularly in agricultural training and resource management, led to significant improvements in crop production and community resilience. However, while the findings offered crucial insights into agricultural capacity building, they lacked consideration of multi-sectoral impacts, indicating a need for more integrated approaches to capacity building in community empowerment.

In Kenya, Wanyama, Kamau and Kibera (2024) explored the impact of capacity building on the performance of community empowerment projects across different sectors, including education and health. The research utilized a mixed-methods

design, targeting community stakeholders, project implementers, and beneficiaries. Random sampling techniques yielded a sample size of 300 respondents. Data collection involved structured questionnaires and focus group discussions. The findings indicated that capacity-building initiatives significantly correlated with improved project outcomes, particularly in enhancing community engagement and satisfaction. Participants noted that targeted training and workshops contributed to better project execution and alignment with community needs. Nevertheless, the study predominantly focused on specific projects, leaving a gap regarding the comprehensive analysis of capacity-building practices across various community empowerment contexts.

## **2.6 Theoretical Review**

The study was guided by Stakeholder Theory and Resource Mobilization Theory.

### **2.6.1 Stakeholder Theory**

Stakeholder Theory was developed by Edward Freeman in 1984. The theory posits that businesses and projects should not solely focus on profit maximization but should also address the interests and well-being of multiple stakeholders, including employees, customers, suppliers, communities, and government entities (Harrison et al., 2019). The fundamental premise of Stakeholder Theory is that organizations operate within a broader social system, and their success is dependent on maintaining a positive and sustainable relationship with their stakeholders (Donaldson & Preston, 1995). The theory is built on three key dimensions: descriptive, instrumental, and normative perspectives. The descriptive aspect explains how organizations interact with their stakeholders, the instrumental perspective analyzes the impact of

stakeholder management on organizational performance, and the normative approach focuses on the ethical responsibility of organizations towards their stakeholders (Jones, Harrison, & Felps, 2019).

Several core components define Stakeholder Theory, making it a useful analytical tool for assessing projects such as community empowerment initiatives. The first component is stakeholder identification, which involves recognizing individuals or groups that have a legitimate interest in a project's outcomes (Mitchell, Agle, & Wood, 1997). The second is stakeholder engagement, which requires active participation, communication, and collaboration between project managers and stakeholders (Freeman et al., 2020). The third component, stakeholder salience, addresses the degree of power, legitimacy, and urgency of stakeholder claims, guiding how resources and attention should be allocated (Neville, Bell, & Whitwell, 2021). These components ensure that stakeholder interests are not only acknowledged but also incorporated into decision-making processes, leading to more sustainable and impactful outcomes.

Stakeholder theory is highly relevant to the research as the community empowerment projects aim to improve the socio-economic well-being of local populations by fostering inclusivity, capacity building, and sustainable development (Muriu, 2020). Given that these projects involve multiple actors government bodies, local leaders, community members, and non-governmental organizations. Stakeholder theory provides a structured approach for analyzing how these entities interact and influence project performance. Effective community empowerment projects require meaningful engagement with local stakeholders, ensuring that their needs, preferences, and concerns are addressed (Ochieng & Mbae, 2021). Public participation approaches

such as consultative meetings, community forums, and participatory budgeting allow stakeholders to contribute to project planning, implementation, and evaluation, thereby increasing accountability and project ownership (Nyaga, 2022).

The theory emphasizes the instrumental role of stakeholder collaboration in enhancing project performance. Projects that actively involve diverse stakeholders tend to be more sustainable, as they leverage collective knowledge, resources, and support (Wang & Berman, 2021). The engaging local communities in decision-making can lead to better resource allocation, increased trust in development initiatives, and a stronger sense of communal responsibility (Mwangi & Wanjiru, 2023). The theory highlights the ethical obligation of project managers to uphold transparency, equity, and inclusivity in public participation efforts. When stakeholders feel valued and included, they are more likely to contribute to the long-term success of community empowerment initiatives.

### **2.6.2 Resource Mobilization Theory**

The theory was developed by John D. McCarthy and Mayer Zald in 1978. The theory explores how social movements, organizations, and communities can access and effectively utilize resources to achieve their objectives. The theory emphasizes the importance of resources such as financial support, human capital, and social networks in the success of collective actions and movements (Taylor & Whittier, 2020). This theory posits that the ability of a group to mobilize resources determines its capacity to engage in social and political action, thereby influencing the outcomes of their initiatives. Theory delineates various types of resources that can be mobilized, including financial resources (grants, donations), human resources (skills and expertise of community members), and social resources (networks and alliances).

These resources are critical for the planning, execution, and sustainability of community empowerment projects (Bebbington *et al.*, 2019).

The theory emphasizes the significance of building networks and alliances among stakeholders. Collaboration with other organizations, community leaders, and government entities can enhance the availability of resources and elevate the visibility of grassroots efforts (Weber & Wiegand, 2021). An organization's internal capacity to manage resources effectively plays a crucial role in its success. This includes the ability to mobilize support, implement strategies, and track resource utilization (Crisp & Houghton, 2023). Communities with strong organizational infrastructure are often better positioned to leverage resources for empowerment projects.

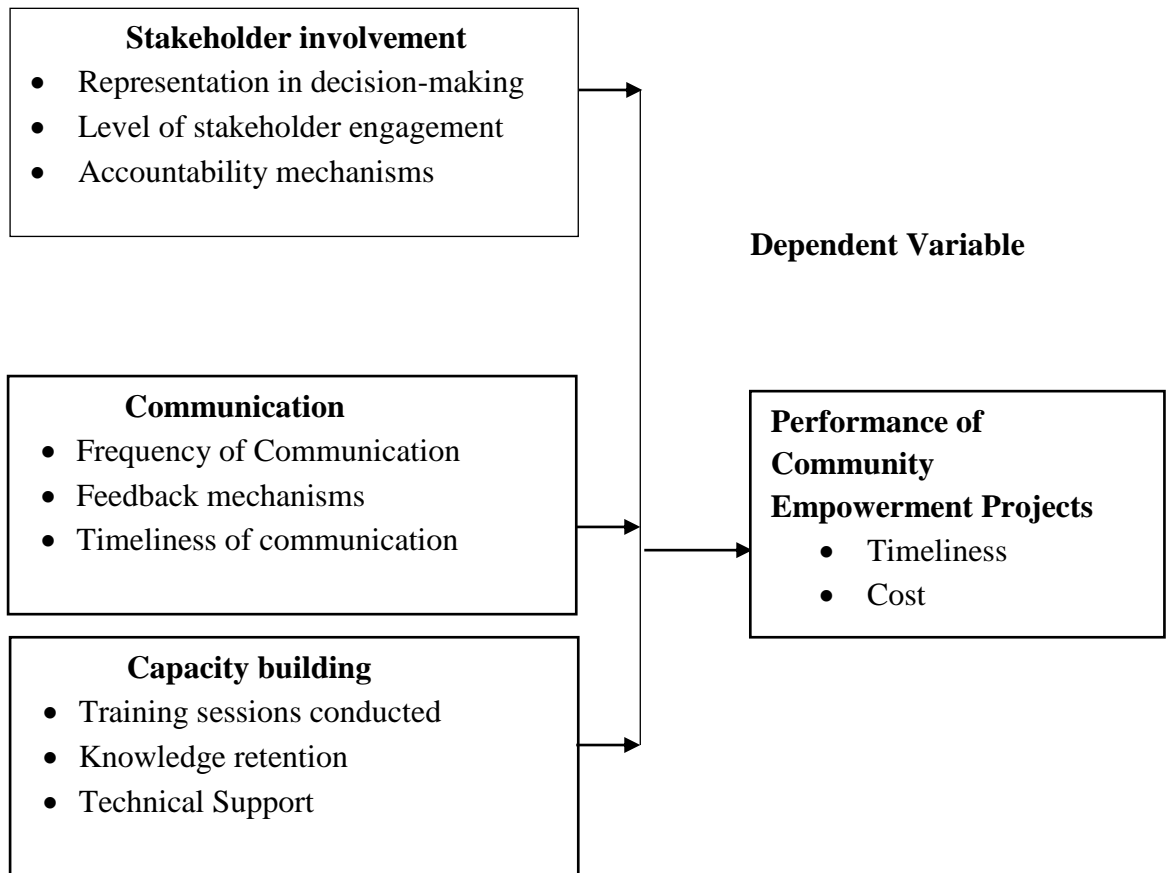
The theory provides a robust framework for understanding how different public participation approaches can influence resource mobilization within the community. The theory particularly is relevant to the study as community empowerment projects often rely on collaboration among various stakeholders, including local government, NGOs, and community-based organizations.

## **2.7 Conceptual Framework**

This provides association between the study's dependent and the independent variables in a form of a diagram. For this study, dependent variable is the performance of community empowerment project, while the stakeholder involvement, communication and capacity building are the independent variables. Figure 2.1. show a representation of the study's conceptual framework.

## Independent Variables

### Public Participation Approaches



**Figure 2.1 Conceptual Framework**

Source: Author (2025)

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

The research project design, target population, sampling technique, sample size, and selection criteria are described in this section. It also states the data gathering techniques, research tools used, and data analysis.

#### **3.2 Research Design**

The research employed a mixed research design. This involves the use of qualitative and quantitative research methodologies. The study will collect qualitative data by interviewing and quantitative data by administering a semi-structured questionnaire to a sample of individuals. In addition, the study utilized empirical data, which will be acquired by reviewing books, reports, journals, documentaries, and articles to complement the raw data.

#### **3.3 Study Variables**

The study consists of independent and dependent variables. The independent variable is public participation approaches, which includes stakeholder involvement, communication and capacity building. The dependent variable is the performance of community empowerment projects, measured through indicators timeliness, scope and quality.

#### **3.4 Location of the Study**

The research was done in Kiambu County, one of the 47 counties (022) in Kenya. The county is 2,543.5 km<sup>2</sup> in size and is located in the center region. The county is

bordered to the south by Nairobi and Kajiado Counties, to the east by Machakos, to the north and east by Murang'a, to the north-west by Nyandarua, and to the west by Nakuru.

The county comprises of twelve (12) sub-counties namely Kikuyu, Limuru, Lari, Kabete, Gatundu North, Gatundu South, Kiambu, Githunguri, Kiambaa, Juja, Ruiru, and Thika Town. The 12 sub counties are further broken down into 60 wards. According to the 2019 KNBS census report, the county has a total 2.4 million people or 795,241 households. The county has 1,187,146 males and 1,230,454 females as well as 135 intersexes according to the said report. Kikuyu and Ruiru towns have the high concentration of urban population followed by Thika and Karuri in that order.

Since the majority of the population lives and works in Nairobi, the county's close proximity to that city can be blamed for the high population density in urban areas. Furthermore, more workers are drawn to some sub-counties like Thika West and Ruiru due to industrial expansion. Urban planning should be done well in these places to prevent the expansion of informal settlements from putting undue strain on the physical amenities, which is why the research's findings must be put into practice. Furthermore, as insecurity impedes development in places like Kiandutu in Thika, community policing ought to be strengthened. More housing, schools, health facilities, and transportation networks should also be constructed. All of these are only achievable with a collaborative strategy.

Given its proximity to Nairobi County which is the most populous county in Kenya, Kiambu receives the excess population as the spillover moves into it thus stretching amenities and other resources. Its strategic proximity to the capital city makes it prone to many people living there while working in the capital city. This causes a stretch on

government services and thus, there is need to ensure development takes place so that the locals are not disadvantaged. The said development can only come when the locals are involved through an intentional and participatory exercise. Therefore, this research study seeks to find out and offer recommendations that the county may consider in order to meet the needs of its citizenry while supporting other counties like Nairobi.

### **3.5 Target Population**

The target population comprised all stakeholders involved in community empowerment projects within Kiambu County. This included community members, project coordinators, local government officials, and representatives from non-governmental organizations (NGOs) active in the area. According to Kiambu County Government (2022) there are 150 community empowerment projects currently underway, involving 3,000 stakeholders. This diverse group provides a comprehensive perspective on the public participation approaches utilized and their subsequent impact on project performance.

### **3.6 Sampling Technique and Sample Size**

The study utilized a combination of stratified and purposive sampling techniques. Stratified sampling was employed to ensure that different subgroups within the target population, such as community members, project officials, and local leaders, were adequately represented. This approach enhances the representativeness of the sample by capturing diverse perspectives within each subgroup. Purposive sampling was then used to select specific participants who possess relevant experience or knowledge related to community empowerment projects in Kiambu County, ensuring that the

most informative individuals were included in the study. For determining the overall sample size, the researcher applied the Yamane formula (Yamane, 1967), which provides a systematic method for calculating an appropriate sample based on the target population size.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2}$$

Where:

n = sample size

N = Population size (3000)

e = margin of error (0.1)

$$n = \frac{3000}{1 + 3000 \times 0.1^2} = 97$$

Therefore, the sample size of 97 respondents.

### **3.7 Research Instruments**

The study utilized semi-structured questionnaires. Structured questionnaires were designed to gather quantitative data, featuring closed-ended questions that facilitate statistical analysis. Additionally, semi-structured sections allow respondents to provide qualitative insights, offering a more nuanced understanding of their experiences and perceptions regarding public participation approaches and project performance. The questionnaire is developed based on existing literature and tailored to address the specific objectives of the study.

### **3.8 Piloting Study**

A pilot study was conducted to assess the feasibility and effectiveness of the research instruments. This involved administering the questionnaire to a small, representative subset of the target population typically 10% of the calculated sample size. However, only 10 respondents were involved in pilot study. The pilot study aimed to identify any ambiguities, inconsistencies, or challenges in the questionnaire, allowing for necessary revisions before the main data collection phase. Feedback from pilot participants was instrumental in refining the questions to ensure clarity and relevance.

#### **3.8.1 Validity**

Validity refers to the extent to which an instrument measures what it is intended to measure. The study focused on three types of validity: Content validity ensured the questionnaire comprehensively covers all aspects of the research topic. This was achieved by aligning questions with the study's objectives and consulting existing literature to include all relevant dimensions. The face validity assessed whether the instrument appears effective in terms of its stated aims. This involved a superficial examination to ensure that the questions are appropriate and seem to measure the intended constructs. The construct validity evaluated whether the questionnaire truly measures the theoretical constructs it purports to assess. This was verified through expert reviews and, if possible, statistical analyses.

#### **3.8.2 Reliability**

Reliability looks at the consistency as well as the stability of the instrument or tool of research. The average correlation or internal consistency of the survey instrument's items were determined using Cronbach's alpha to gauge how reliable it is at evaluating and enhancing the reliability of variables derived from summated scales.

The research utilized the Cronbach's alpha coefficient, which has a range of 0 to 1. The research tools were deemed reliable if, upon computation, a coefficient of 0.7 or greater was obtained.

### **3.9 Data Collection Techniques**

The study entailed both qualitative and quantitative data. Quantitative data was gathered through semi-structured questionnaires for the women, youths, men and people with disability as well as employees of the county. On the other hand, qualitative data was collected through interviews for all the respective groups but with a bias towards the budget committee members and the sub-county administrative officers. The questionnaires were distributed to the sampled population and filled in with the guidance of the researcher.

### **3.10 Data Analysis and Presentation**

The study employed both quantitative and qualitative data analysis methods: Quantitative data from closed-ended questionnaire items were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations. Inferential statistics, like regression analyses were utilized to explore relationships between public participation approaches and project performance. Statistical analysis is conducted using software like SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences version 26).

The general multiple regression method adopted is represented in the form:

The multiple regression equation is;

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \beta_3X_3+ \beta_4X_4+\epsilon$$

Where;

Y = Performance of community empowerment projects

$\beta_0$  - intercept coefficient

$X_1$  = Stakeholder involvement

$X_2$  = Communication

$X_3$  = Capacity building

$\beta_1, \beta_2,$  and  $\beta_3$  = regression coefficients

$\varepsilon_i$  - error term (extraneous variables)

The qualitative data from open-ended questions were analyzed thematically. This involved identifying common themes, patterns, and insights that provide a deeper understanding of stakeholders' experiences and perceptions. Qualitative analysis complements the quantitative findings, offering a holistic view of the data.

### **3.11 Logistical and Ethical Considerations**

This study used the institution (Kenyatta University) letter of introduction and seek the license from National Commission for Science Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) to conduct the research. This research also integrated technology where, respondents used google form application. The other respondents that require physical meeting was attended to at the cost of the researcher.

Ethically, this research sought to employ ethical principles in its implementation. The respondents were requested to respond voluntarily without any coercion to take care of the informed consent principle. The participants were educated of the use of the

data and privacy was assured as none of the data for the respondents or even their response was shared with a third party. Anonymity was employed in this study and the names of the respondents were not form part of the report that came out at the end of the research. This ensured privacy and boost the confidence levels of the respondents.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

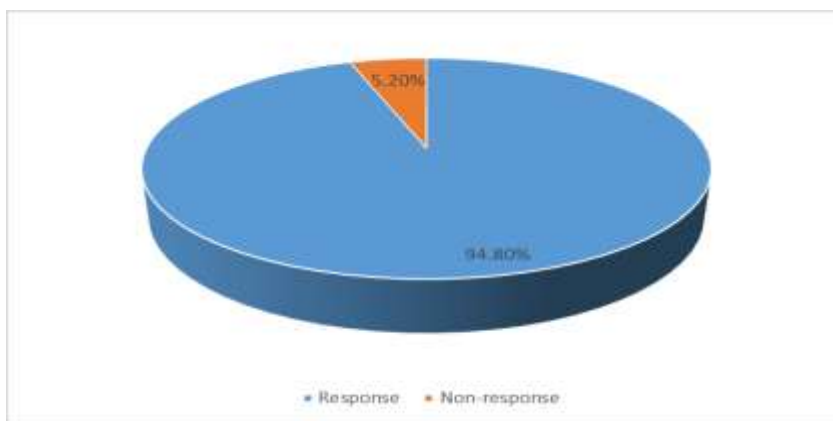
### **RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents research findings and discussions. The study goal was to determine the effect of public participation approaches on the performance of community empowerment projects in Kiambu County, Kenya. The study relied on primary and secondary data. The analyzed data were presented in form of figures and tables.

#### **4.2 Response Rate**

The researcher dispatched 97 questionnaires to selected respondents. However, 92 questionnaires were dully filled and returned to the researcher. This gave a response rate of 94.8% which is deemed sufficient for the study. Mugenda and Mugenda (2008) contend that a response rate of 50% is acceptable for analysis, response rate of over half is good while over 70% is very good. The response rate was therefore adequate for the study to make relevant conclusions basing on the responses. The results were presented in Figure 4.1



**Figure 4.1 Response Rate**

**Source: Field Data (2024)**

### **4.3 Respondents Profile**

Respondents were asked to indicate their demographic information to establish whether the respondents of the study were a representative sample of the target population for generalization purposes. The findings are shown in subsequent sections.

#### **4.3.1 Gender of Respondents**

The study sought to identify the gender of the respondents who took part in the research. The findings are presented in Table 4.1.

**Table 4.1 Respondents' Gender**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>%</b>
Male	54	58.7%
Female	38	41.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source: Field Data (2024)**

The survey results in Table 4.1 show that 54 (58.7%) of respondents are male and 38 (41.3%) are female. This suggests that the findings of the study did not adversely affect gender stigma, as both male and female respondents in this review showed decent involvement. Women's perspectives and priorities might be better reflected in policies and projects, potentially resulting in more equitable distribution of resources and targeted interventions to address gender-specific challenges.

### 4.3.2 Participants' Age

The participants were mentioned to demonstrate their age. Age of the respondents is an irreplaceable factor in the review since it decides one's experience and method of reacting to circumstances. The discoveries were classified in Table 4.2.

**Table 4.2 Age of the Participants**

Age	f	%
18 – 25 years	7	7.6%
26 – 35 years	31	33.7%
36 – 45 years	40	43.5%
Above 46 years	14	15.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source: Field Data (2024)**

The findings in Table 4.2 show that 40(43.5%) were aged between 36 and 45 years, 31(33.7%) were aged between 26 and 35 years, 14(15.2%) were aged above 46 years while 7(7.6%) were aged between 18 and 25 years. With a potentially diverse range of age groups represented, the Act could have fostered greater youth engagement in governance processes, offering a platform for their voices to be heard in decisions shaping economic policies and initiatives. This increased participation might have led

to the creation of targeted programs to address youth unemployment, entrepreneurship opportunities, and skills development, thereby contributing to more inclusive and sustainable economic growth. However, challenges such as limited awareness, access barriers, and the need for meaningful representation could have hindered the Act's effectiveness in fully harnessing the potential of youth participation.

#### **4.4 Descriptive Statistics**

This study utilized mean, standard deviation and coefficient of variation to present the summary measures of the sample that was observed. Analysis of descriptive statistics was conducted on the basis of the data collected on the variables that were at the core of this study. The basic feature of the observed sample formed the basis for quantitative data analysis for this study.

##### **4.4.1 Stakeholder Involvement**

The objective one of the study was to examine the effect of stakeholder involvement on the performance of community empowerment projects. Participants were requested to specify their level of agreement with each statement regarding to effect of stakeholder involvement on community empowerment projects. The research embraced a 5-likert scale from 5-strongly agreed to 1-strongly disagreed. The responses from the participants were presented in Table 4.3

**Table 4.3 Descriptive Statistics on Stakeholder Involvement**

<b>Statements</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Dev</b>
Engaged stakeholders contribute ideas that improve project outcomes.	92	3.89	0.958
Community participation ensures that projects meet local needs.	92	3.95	0.978
Stakeholder participation leads to better decision-making.	92	3.91	0.962
Regular stakeholder meetings improve accountability.	92	3.86	0.945
Projects with strong stakeholder support are more sustainable.	92	3.76	0.879
Involvement of local leaders enhances trust and cooperation.	92	3.84	0.916
Active involvement reduces resistance to project implementation.	92	3.74	0.867
<b>Average scores</b>		<b>3.85</b>	<b>0.929</b>

**Source: Field Data (2024)**

The findings in Table 4.3 highlight the crucial role of stakeholder involvement in the success of community empowerment projects. The results indicate that engaging stakeholders contributes significantly to project outcomes, as evidenced by a mean score of 3.89 and a standard deviation of 0.958. This finding aligns with previous studies, such as Ouma (2020), which emphasized that involving stakeholders allows for the incorporation of diverse perspectives, leading to more comprehensive project designs and better implementation strategies.

Additionally, the study shows that community participation ensures that projects meet local needs, with a mean of 3.95 and a standard deviation of 0.978. This suggests a consensus that involving community members in the project lifecycle ensures

alignment with local priorities. This finding is consistent with the conclusions of Kamau and Wanjiru (2019), who asserted that when communities are actively engaged in project planning, the resulting initiatives are more relevant and sustainable. Conversely, lack of participation often results in projects that fail to address critical local challenges.

The study further found that stakeholder participation leads to better decision-making, with a mean score of 3.91 and a standard deviation of 0.962. This reflects the belief that collaborative decision-making processes, enriched by diverse stakeholder perspectives, enhance the quality of project decisions. This supports the findings of Nyaga (2021), who highlighted that participatory decision-making fosters inclusivity, reducing conflicts and enhancing the effectiveness of community projects. Stakeholder involvement ensures that decisions reflect the needs and priorities of the beneficiaries, thereby increasing project acceptance.

Regular stakeholder meetings were found to improve accountability, with a mean of 3.86 and a standard deviation of 0.945. This infers that consistent engagement with stakeholders fosters transparency and accountability in project management. This agrees with the findings of Mutua (2018), which indicated that periodic consultations among stakeholders promote transparency and responsibility in project implementation. Accountability mechanisms, such as community forums and feedback sessions, provide opportunities for addressing concerns and monitoring progress effectively.

Furthermore, the findings indicate that projects with strong stakeholder support are more sustainable, as reflected in a mean score of 3.76 and a standard deviation of

0.879. This suggests that projects backed by active stakeholder engagement are more likely to achieve long-term sustainability. This observation is in line with Muthoni and Mwangi (2022), who demonstrated that stakeholder buy-in enhances project longevity. When stakeholders feel a sense of ownership, they are more likely to contribute resources and support long-term project success.

The study also found that the involvement of local leaders enhances trust and cooperation, with a mean of 3.84 and a standard deviation of 0.916. This suggests that engaging local leadership fosters trust and collaborative efforts within the community. This finding concurs with Wainaina et al. (2023), who argued that local leadership plays a vital role in building credibility and mobilizing community support for development initiatives. Local leaders act as intermediaries between project implementers and the community, ensuring smooth communication and collaboration.

Finally, active involvement of stakeholders was found to reduce resistance to project implementation, as indicated by a mean of 3.74 and a standard deviation of 0.867. This suggests that proactive stakeholder engagement mitigates opposition and facilitates smoother project execution. This is consistent with the findings of Njoroge (2020), who posited that when stakeholders are involved from the outset, they develop a sense of commitment to the project, minimizing opposition and resistance. Resistance often arises when projects are perceived as externally imposed rather than community-driven.

The qualitative findings established that stakeholder involvement is crucial for the success of community empowerment projects in Kiambu. When local leaders, community members, and NGOs actively participate, they bring diverse perspectives

and local knowledge that help tailor projects to actual needs. This collective effort fosters ownership and commitment, which ultimately improves the project's sustainability and impact. Without proper stakeholder engagement, projects risk being disconnected from the community's realities and may not achieve desired outcomes."

Participants expressed that stakeholder involvement significantly enhances the performance of community empowerment projects. Many emphasized that when stakeholders actively participate, they contribute valuable ideas and resources, which lead to better project outcomes. Some respondents noted that involving local leaders fosters trust and cooperation, reducing resistance to project implementation. Others highlighted that stakeholder engagement ensures projects address actual community needs, increasing their sustainability.

#### **4.4.2 Communication**

Objective two of the study was to assess effect of communication on the performance of community empowerment projects. Participants were requested to specify their level of agreement with each statement regarding to how the communication affect the performance of community empowerment projects. The research embraced a 5-likert scale from 5-strongly agreed to 1-strongly disagreed. The responses are tabulated in Table 4.4.

**Table 4.4 Descriptive Statistics on Communication**

<b>Statements</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Dev</b>
Clear communication improves stakeholder understanding of project goals.	92	3.75	0.863
Regular updates keep the community informed and engaged.	92	3.83	0.879
Open communication builds trust between project leaders and beneficiaries.	92	3.79	0.868
Providing feedback channels helps address stakeholder concerns.	92	3.81	0.871
Good communication strengthens collaboration among stakeholders.	92	3.68	0.764
Effective communication enhances transparency in decision-making.	92	3.59	0.753
Timely information sharing leads to quicker problem-solving.	92	3.67	0.760
A well-informed community actively supports project initiatives.	92	3.71	0.763
<b>Average scores</b>		<b>3.73</b>	<b>0.815</b>

**Source: Field Data (2024)**

The findings in Table 4.4 emphasize the role of communication in ensuring the success of community empowerment projects. Clear communication was found to improve stakeholder understanding of project goals, with a mean score of 3.75 and a standard deviation of 0.863. This suggests that when information is conveyed explicitly, project participants better grasp the intended outcomes, reducing misinterpretations and fostering goal alignment. Previous research underscores that well-structured communication improves engagement and clarity, thereby strengthening the effectiveness of community projects (Mugambi & Kariuki, 2020).

Regular updates keep the community informed and engaged has a mean of 3.83 (SD = 0.879), the findings suggest that consistent project updates enhance community involvement. Regular communication ensures that stakeholders remain knowledgeable about project progress, potential challenges, and necessary adjustments. Studies by Wanjiru (2021) highlight that periodic reporting fosters transparency and inclusivity, thereby improving stakeholder participation in community-driven projects.

Open communication builds trust between project leaders and beneficiaries has a mean score of 3.79 (SD = 0.868) indicates that open dialogue fosters trust between project administrators and beneficiaries. Effective two-way communication enables beneficiaries to feel valued and involved, thereby strengthening their commitment to the project's success. According to Mutuku and Mwangi (2019), trust is a cornerstone for project sustainability, as it ensures continued support from stakeholders.

Providing feedback channels helps address stakeholder concerns has a mean of 3.81 (SD = 0.871), suggesting that accessible feedback mechanisms contribute to the resolution of community concerns. When stakeholders have avenues for expressing opinions and grievances, they are more likely to remain engaged. Research by Kamau (2022) supports this, asserting that participatory communication fosters a responsive and adaptive project environment, ultimately improving performance.

Good communication strengthens collaboration among stakeholders has mean score of 3.68 (SD = 0.764). This implies that strong communication facilitates cooperation among involved parties. When stakeholders share information efficiently, they can align their efforts toward common goals, reducing duplication and fostering synergy.

Studies by Ndung'u and Njoroge (2020) reinforce that collaboration driven by clear communication enhances project cohesion and shared responsibility.

Effective communication enhances transparency in decision-making has a mean of 3.59 (SD = 0.753) suggests that transparent communication processes contribute to fair and inclusive decision-making. When stakeholders are well-informed about decision-making procedures, they are more likely to trust project governance structures. Research by Omondi (2018) confirms that transparency in communication mitigates conflicts and strengthens governance in community projects.

Timely information sharing leads to quicker problem-solving has a mean of 3.67 (SD = 0.760), the study affirms that prompt communication expedites issue resolution. Timely dissemination of information allows for early identification of challenges and swift action to address them. Studies by Karanja et al. (2019) indicate that real-time updates minimize delays and disruptions in project implementation.

A well-informed community actively supports project initiatives has a mean = 3.71, (SD = 0.763) highlight that informed community members are more likely to support and participate in project activities. Knowledgeable beneficiaries can contribute ideas, offer feedback, and actively engage in execution. Research by Waithaka (2023) corroborates this, stating that informed communities exhibit higher levels of ownership and commitment to project success. The study by Githinji (2021) found that clear and open communication played a pivotal role in enhancing stakeholder participation and overall project effectiveness. Specifically, Githinji's research supports the notion that transparency in decision-making, timely updates, and regular feedback mechanisms are crucial for fostering engagement and trust among stakeholders.

Regarding communication, participants stated that clear and transparent communication is vital for project success. Many emphasized that regular updates keep the community informed and engaged, reducing conflicts and misunderstandings. Some respondents highlighted that open communication builds trust between project leaders and beneficiaries, ensuring cooperation and commitment. Others noted that providing feedback channels allows stakeholders to voice concerns, leading to better decision-making and problem-solving.

#### 4.4.3 Capacity Building

The third objective of the study was to determine the effect of capacity building on the performance of community empowerment projects. Participants were requested to indicate their level of agreement with each statement regarding effect of capacity on the performance of community empowerment projects. The research utilized a 5-likert scale from 5-strongly agreed to 1-strongly disagreed. The responses are presented in Table 4.5.

**Table 4.5 Descriptive Statistics for Capacity Building**

<b>Statements</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Dev</b>
Training improves community members' ability to manage projects.	92	3.67	0.748
Skill development increases employment opportunities in the community.	92	3.72	0.752
Capacity building empowers people to take leadership roles.	92	3.65	0.719
Capacity building fosters innovation in project implementation.	92	3.69	0.724
Technical training enhances project efficiency.	92	3.73	0.761
Educated stakeholders make better project decisions.	92	3.77	0.783
Empowered communities take ownership of development initiatives.	92	3.81	0.816
<b>Average scores</b>		<b>3.72</b>	<b>0.756</b>

**Source: Field Data (2024)**

The findings in Table 4.5 emphasize the importance of capacity building in enhancing the effectiveness of community empowerment projects. Training was found to improve community members' ability to manage projects, with a mean score of 3.67 and a standard deviation of 0.748. This finding suggests that community members feel that their skills and competencies have been significantly improved through training initiatives. This finding aligns with the study by Karanja and Mwangi (2021), which established that training equips community members with the necessary skills to oversee project implementation and ensure sustainability.

Skill development was found to increase employment opportunities in the community, as indicated by a mean score of 3.72 and a standard deviation of 0.752. The positive response to this statement emphasizes the belief that skill development initiatives can lead to greater employment prospects. This finding is consistent with Wanjiku et al. (2022), who noted that communities that invest in skill development experience improved economic prospects and reduced unemployment rates. Equipping individuals with practical skills enhances their ability to engage in income-generating activities.

Capacity building was also found to empower people to take leadership roles, with a mean of 3.65 and a standard deviation of 0.719. This reflects that capacity building enhance leadership among community members. This finding supports the work of Otieno (2020), which found that training community members in leadership enhances governance and decision-making at the grassroots level. Leadership skills enable individuals to take charge of development initiatives and advocate for community needs.

The study further revealed that capacity building fosters innovation in project implementation, with a mean score of 3.69 and a standard deviation of 0.724. The capacity building encourages innovative approaches to project implementation. This aligns with the findings of Mutua and Wambui (2019), who highlighted that training fosters creativity and problem-solving skills, leading to the adoption of new and effective approaches in community projects.

Technical training was found to enhance project efficiency, with a mean of 3.73 and a standard deviation of 0.761. The high mean score for this statement indicates a strong belief that technical training contributes to the efficiency of projects. This finding concurs with Omondi (2018), who noted that equipping community members with technical knowledge ensures that projects are executed with precision and minimal resource wastage.

Educated stakeholders were found to make better project decisions, as indicated by a mean score of 3.77 and a standard deviation of 0.783. This indicates that knowledgeable stakeholders bring valuable insights and improve the quality of decisions that affect project implementation, aligning closely with effective outcomes. This finding supports the conclusions of Wainaina and Njuguna (2022), who argued that informed stakeholders are more likely to make strategic and well-informed choices, leading to improved project outcomes.

Lastly, the study found that empowered communities take ownership of development initiatives, with a mean score of 3.81 and a standard deviation of 0.816. The highest mean score reflects a strong belief in the importance of community ownership for the success of development initiatives. This aligns with research by Kamau et al. (2021), which established that capacity building fosters self-reliance, ensuring that

communities actively participate in and sustain development projects beyond initial implementation phases.

On capacity building, participants noted that training and skill development empower community members to manage projects effectively. Many respondents stated that capacity building enhances employment opportunities by equipping individuals with practical skills. Some emphasized that technical training improves project efficiency, while others highlighted that leadership training enables community members to take charge of development initiatives. Participants agreed that an empowered community is more likely to take ownership of projects, ensuring long-term sustainability.

#### **4.4.4 Performance of Community Empowerment Projects**

The participants were requested to rate their level of agreement with each statement related to performance of Community Empowerment Projects on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 represented "strongly disagree" and 5 indicated "strongly agree." The means and standard deviations were then calculated, and the results are exhibited in Table 4.6.

**Table 4.6: Descriptive Statistics on Performance of Community Empowerment Projects**

<b>Statements</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Dev</b>
Public participation improves the success of community empowerment projects.	92	3.96	0.942
Effective participation leads to better project planning and implementation.	92	3.87	0.923
Public participation enhances transparency and accountability in projects.	92	3.84	0.917
Regular consultations with the community improve project impact.	92	3.80	0.895
Inclusive decision-making increases community ownership of projects.	92	3.76	0.882
Community engagement ensures that project resources are used effectively.	92	3.89	0.934
Involvement of diverse stakeholders strengthens project sustainability.	92	3.79	0.891
<b>Average</b>		<b>3.84</b>	<b>0.912</b>

**Source: Field Data (2024)**

Table 4.6 provides a detailed analysis of the performance of community empowerment projects in Kiambu County, highlighting the perceptions of respondents regarding various aspects of public participation. The mean scores range from 3.76 to 3.96, with an average score of 3.84, indicating a consensus on the significance of public involvement in these initiatives.

Public participation improves the success of community empowerment projects (Mean: 3.96, Std. Dev: 0.942). This statement received the highest mean score of 3.96, demonstrating a strong belief among respondents that public participation is essential for the success of community empowerment projects. This finding resonates

with Wabuge (2023), who highlights that community involvement is critical in fostering ownership and accountability, which are keys to successful project implementation.

Effective participation leads to better project planning and implementation (Mean: 3.87, Std. Dev: 0.923). The participants recognize that effective public participation enhances the planning and execution of projects. This finding aligns with Njuguna and Mwangi (2022), who argue that engaging community members in the project planning stages allows for better alignment of project objectives with community needs, thus improving overall efficacy.

Public participation enhances transparency and accountability in projects (Mean: 3.84, Std. Dev: 0.917). This indicates that many respondents believe public participation fosters transparency and accountability in project implementation. This corresponds with Ndung'u (2021), who notes that involving community members in oversight roles can lead to greater trust in project management and better resource allocation.

Regular consultations with the community improve project impact (Mean: 3.80, Std. Dev: 0.895). This underscores the importance of continuous dialogue with community members in maximizing project impacts. This finding supports the assertions of Hirsh (2020), who found that regular consultations enable projects to adapt to changing community needs and contexts, thus enhancing their relevance and effectiveness.

Inclusive decision-making increases community ownership of projects (Mean: 3.76, Std. Dev: 0.882). This statement reflects the understanding that inclusive decision-making fosters a sense of ownership among community members. Kihoro (2019) asserts that when community members are involved in decision-making processes,

they are more likely to engage actively in projects and take responsibility for their outcomes, leading to sustained project success.

Community engagement ensures that project resources are used effectively (Mean: 3.89, Std. Dev: 0.934). The respondents believe community engagement plays a vital role in the effective utilization of project resources. Miyandazi (2021) supports this finding, indicating that stakeholder involvement helps to ensure resources are allocated based on actual community needs rather than external perceptions, leading to more efficient use of resources.

Involvement of diverse stakeholders strengthens project sustainability (Mean: 3.79, Std. Dev: 0.891) This highlights that engaging a variety of stakeholders contributes to the sustainability of community empowerment projects. This is in agreement with Ogola (2022), who emphasizes that diverse stakeholder involvement cultivates a wider support base, thereby enhancing the resilience and long-term viability of projects.

#### **4.5 Inferential Statistics**

The researcher conducted regression analysis to establish how public participation approaches affects the performance of community empowerment projects in Kiambu County, Kenya. The findings of Model Summary and ANOVA are as shown in subsequent sections.

##### **4.5.1 Model Summary**

The findings of coefficient of correlation R and coefficient of adjusted determination  $R^2$  is as shown in Table 4.7.

**Table 4.7 Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	R	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.786	0.618	0.609		0.103

**a. Predictors: (Constant), Stakeholder involvement, communication and capacity building**

**b. Dependent Variable: Performance of community empowerment projects**

**Source: Field Data (2024)**

Table 4.7 presents a model summary indicating the relationship between stakeholder involvement, communication, capacity building, and the performance of community empowerment projects in Kiambu County, Kenya. The findings shows an R value of 0.786, indicating a strong positive correlation between the predictors and the performance of these projects. This suggests that as stakeholder involvement, effective communication, and capacity-building efforts increase, so too does project performance. The R<sup>2</sup> value of 0.618 indicates that approximately 61.8% of the variability in the performance of community empowerment projects is explained by the combination of the identified predictors: stakeholder involvement, communication, and capacity building. This is a significant proportion, demonstrating that these factors are critical determinants of effective project outcomes. The findings agree with Wanjohi (2021), who highlighted that community participation enhances ownership, accountability, and sustainability of projects. However, they contrast with the findings of Ndirangu (2020), who argued that external factors such as government policies and funding constraints sometimes weaken the impact of stakeholder involvement.

#### 4.5.2 ANOVA

An ANOVA was conducted at 95% level of significant, the findings of  $F_{\text{Calculated}}$  and  $F_{\text{Critical}}$  are as shown in Table 4.8.

**Table 4.8 ANOVA**

<b>Model</b>	<b>SS</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>MS</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>Significance</b>
Regression	35.96	3	.121	2.17	0.003 <sup>b</sup>
Residual	14.32	89	1.241		
Total	49.28	92			

**a. Predictors: (Constant), Stakeholder involvement, communication and capacity building**

**b. Dependent Variable: Performance of community empowerment projects**

**Source: Field Data (2024)**

Table 4.8 presents the results of the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) for the regression model examining the relationship between stakeholder involvement, communication, capacity building, and the performance of community empowerment projects. The regression sum of squares (SS) is 35.96, with 3 degrees of freedom (df), indicating the variability explained by the model. The mean square (MS) for the regression is calculated as 0.121, which is derived from dividing the regression SS by its df. The F-statistic is 2.17, and the significance level (p-value) is 0.003. This p-value is less than the conventional alpha level of 0.05, indicating that the model is statistically significant. In other words, there is strong evidence to suggest that at least one of the predictors (stakeholder involvement, communication, or capacity building) significantly contributes to explaining the variance in the performance of community empowerment projects.

### 4.5.3 Regression Coefficients

Regression analysis was utilized by the researcher to explore the individual effects of independent variables on dependent variables. The outcomes are exhibited in Table 4.9.

**Table 4.9 Regression Coefficients**

Multiple Regression Analysis Variables	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	$\beta$	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	0.458	0.116		1.203	.005
Stakeholder involvement	0.268	0.0112	0.227	1.186	.006
Communication	0.215	0.0104	0.219	1.168	.004
Capacity building	0.227	0.0109	0.226	1.212	.003

**Source: Field Data (2024)**

The association between public participation approaches and performance of community empowerment projects was investigated using multiple regression analysis.

As per the SPSS generated table, the equation ( $Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \beta_3X_3 + \varepsilon$ ) becomes:

$$Y = 0.458 + 0.268X_1 + 0.215X_2 + 0.227X_3$$

Where Y = Performance of community empowerment projects

X<sub>1</sub> = Stakeholder involvement

X<sub>2</sub> = Communication

X<sub>3</sub> = Capacity building

Table 4.9 outlines the regression coefficients for stakeholder involvement, communication, and capacity building. Each predictor's  $\beta$  (unstandardized coefficient) provides insight into the magnitude of its impact on project performance, while the corresponding t-statistics and significance (Sig.) values denote the reliability of these relationships.

**Stakeholder Involvement ( $\beta = 0.268$ , Sig. = 0.006)**

The unstandardized coefficient for stakeholder involvement is 0.268, which indicates that for each unit increase in stakeholder involvement, the performance of community empowerment projects increases by 0.268 units, controlling for other variables in the model. The significance level of 0.006 suggests a high level of statistical importance, indicating that stakeholder involvement plays a vital role in enhancing project outcomes. This finding aligns with studies by Wabuge (2023) and Njuguna & Mwangi (2022), which assert that active engagement and participation of stakeholders are paramount for the success of community-driven projects.

**Communication ( $\beta = 0.215$ , Sig. = 0.004)**

The coefficient for communication is 0.215, reflecting its significant positive impact on project performance. The significance level of 0.004 denotes that this variable is also statistically significant. Effective communication among stakeholders, as indicated by this result, is crucial for ensuring that information flows adequately between community members, project managers, and various stakeholders. Hirsh (2020) supports these findings, suggesting that clear communication channels enhance collaboration and coordination efforts, ultimately leading to better project results.

**Capacity Building ( $\beta = 0.227$ , Sig. = 0.003)**

Capacity building has a coefficient of 0.227 with a significance level of 0.003, indicating a strong positive impact on performance. This suggests that increasing capacity building initiatives within the community leads to enhanced project performance. This result resonates with the assertion made by Miyandazi (2021) that empowering community members through skills development and training can significantly boost their effectiveness in project execution. The statistical significance of this coefficient reinforces the notion that investing in capacity-building initiatives is crucial to the sustainability of community empowerment projects.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the summary of the findings, conclusion and recommendations are based on the on the findings. Suggestions for further studies are also drawn.

#### **5.2 Summary of Study Findings**

The findings regarding the effect of stakeholder involvement on the performance of community empowerment projects indicate that active engagement of stakeholders is crucial for achieving successful project outcomes. Engaging various stakeholders, including government agencies, non-governmental organizations, and community members, strengthens project sustainability. Stakeholder involvement fosters knowledge-sharing, builds trust, and encourages collective ownership of projects. The active participation of diverse stakeholders ensures that decisions made align with the needs and aspirations of the target community, reducing the risk of project failure.

Communication emerged as another pivotal factor influencing the performance of community empowerment projects. The findings indicated that clear and effective communication channels are essential in ensuring stakeholders understand project goals and remain engaged throughout the project lifecycle. Participants expressed that regular updates and open dialogues build trust and foster a collaborative environment among project leaders and beneficiaries. These aspects not only improve transparency but also enable timely problem-solving and adaptiveness to changing circumstances. The findings indicated that robust communication mechanisms enhance stakeholder participation, which is, in turn, linked to better project outcomes, reinforcing the

notion that effective communication is fundamental to successful community engagement in development initiatives.

The study also established the vital role of capacity building in enhancing community empowerment project performance. Findings showed that training and skill development initiatives equip community members with the necessary competencies to effectively manage projects and foster innovation. The mean scores for various capacity-building statements highlighted the positive belief that such efforts empower individuals to take leadership roles and improve decision-making capabilities. Additionally, enhanced technical skills were recognized as contributing to greater project efficiency and supporting economic opportunities within the community. Ultimately, a well-capacitated community, empowered through training and resources, is more likely to take ownership of development initiatives, ensuring sustainability and long-term success in community empowerment projects.

### **5.3 Conclusion**

The study concludes that stakeholder involvement is a critical factor in the success of community empowerment projects. Engaging a diverse range of stakeholders, including government agencies, community leaders, and non-governmental organizations, fosters collaboration, trust, and accountability. When stakeholders are actively involved, project ownership is enhanced, ensuring that decisions align with community needs. The stakeholder engagement also strengthens project sustainability by leveraging external expertise, financial resources, and technical support, ultimately leading to long-term project success.

Effective communication emerged as another key determinant of project performance. The study highlights that open and transparent communication channels improve stakeholder engagement, minimize conflicts, and enhance project responsiveness. Clear communication ensures that community members understand project objectives, timelines, and expected outcomes, which fosters trust and cooperation. Regular consultations and feedback mechanisms contribute to adaptive project management, allowing implementers to address emerging challenges and align interventions with community needs.

Capacity building emerged as a pivotal factor in empowering community members to effectively contribute to and manage development initiatives. Capacity-building initiatives enhance self-reliance, improve resource utilization, and reduce dependence on external support. The study concludes that empowering communities through continuous education and training fosters long-term project sustainability and enhances the overall impact of community development initiatives.

#### **5.4 Contribution to Knowledge**

This research significantly advances understanding of the relationship between public participation approaches and the performance of community empowerment projects, particularly within the context of Kiambu County, Kenya. The study offers empirical evidence demonstrating that inclusive and participatory strategies positively influence project outcomes, community engagement, and sustainability. It highlights the critical role of tailored participation approaches in enhancing transparency, accountability, and local ownership in community development initiatives. Additionally, the findings provide valuable insights for policymakers, development practitioners, and local governments seeking to optimize community empowerment efforts through effective

participation frameworks. This research thus bridges existing knowledge gaps by contextualizing participation strategies within Kiambu County, contributing to the broader discourse on participatory development and community-driven progress in Kenya and similar settings.

## **5.5 Recommendation**

From the findings, the following recommendations are deduced;

To the Government of Kenya, it is recommended that policies promoting public participation in community empowerment projects should be strengthened. The government should allocate sufficient resources to facilitate stakeholder engagement and ensure that participatory frameworks are effectively implemented. Additionally, establishing legal mandates that require public involvement in project planning and execution will enhance transparency, accountability, and long-term success.

For the County Government of Kiambu, there is a need to improve communication and feedback mechanisms between local authorities and community members. By creating platforms for regular consultations, town hall meetings, and digital engagement channels, the county government should ensure that community voices are heard, and their needs are adequately addressed. Furthermore, investing in training programs for community members and project implementers will improve project planning, execution, and sustainability.

To stakeholders, including non-governmental organizations, private sector actors, and community-based organizations, collaborative partnerships should be strengthened. Stakeholders should work closely with local communities to provide technical expertise, financial support, and capacity-building programs. Encouraging inclusive

decision-making processes will foster project ownership and long-term commitment from beneficiaries.

For policymakers, it is crucial to develop and enforce policies that institutionalize community participation in development initiatives. This includes designing guidelines that promote inclusive decision-making, resource transparency, and regular monitoring and evaluation of community projects. Additionally, policies should advocate for gender-sensitive and inclusive approaches that ensure all community members have equal opportunities to contribute to and benefit from empowerment projects.

#### **5.6 Suggestions for Further Studies**

Comparable research can be conducted in other areas in Kenya to ascertain if consistent results can be achieved. Therefore, further research on the role of civil society organizations in facilitating citizen participation in economic development should be done.

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## APPENDICES

Dear Sir/Madam

### APPENDIX I: LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

I am a postgraduate student at Kenyatta University pursuing a Master Degree in Public Policy and Administration. I am conducting a research study entitled **“PUBLIC PARTICIPATION APPROACHES AND PERFORMANCE OF COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT PROJECTS: A CASE OF KIAMBU COUNTY, KENYA”**. This research is conducted solely for academic purposes, and the information gathered will only be utilized within the context of this study. Rest assured, your responses will be kept strictly confidential. Your cooperation will be greatly appreciated.

Yours faithfully,

Purity Jebor Ainea

## APPENDIX II: RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

Your contribution responses and support to this study will be highly appreciated and the information given will be treated with confidentiality.

### SECTION A: GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Gender    Male       Female                     

2. Age of the respondent

18 – 25 years             

26 – 35 years             

36 – 45 years             

Above 46 years           

3. What is your educational level?

Diploma level             

Degree level               

Master level               

PhD level                   

### SECTION B: STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT

Please rate each of the statements below on how stakeholder involvement affects the performance of community empowerment projects. For all the statements, 5=Strongly Agree, 4=Agree, 3=Neutral, 2=Disagree and 1=Strongly Disagree.

Statements	SA	A	N	D	SD
Engaged stakeholders contribute ideas that improve project outcomes.					
Community participation ensures that projects meet local					

needs.					
Stakeholder participation leads to better decision-making.					
Regular stakeholder meetings improve accountability.					
Projects with strong stakeholder support are more sustainable.					
Involvement of local leaders enhances trust and cooperation.					
Active involvement reduces resistance to project implementation.					

In your own opinions, how does the stakeholder involvement affect the performance of community empowerment projects in Kiambu County, Kenya?

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### SECTION C: COMMUNICATION

Please rate each of the statements below on how communication affects the performance of community empowerment projects. For all the statements, 5=Strongly Agree, 4=Agree, 3=Neutral, 2=Disagree and 1=Strongly Disagree.

Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD
Clear communication improves stakeholder understanding					

of project goals.					
Regular updates keep the community informed and engaged.					
Open communication builds trust between project leaders and beneficiaries.					
Providing feedback channels helps address stakeholder concerns.					
Good communication strengthens collaboration among stakeholders.					
Effective communication enhances transparency in decision-making.					
Timely information sharing leads to quicker problem-solving.					
A well-informed community actively supports project initiatives.					

In your own opinions, how does the communication affect the performance of community empowerment projects in Kiambu County, Kenya?

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## SECTION D: CAPACITY BUILDING

Please rate each of the statements below on how capacity building affects the performance of community empowerment projects. For all the statements, 5=Strongly Agree, 4=Agree, 3=Neutral, 2=Disagree and 1=Strongly Disagree.

Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD
Training improves community members' ability to manage projects.					
Skill development increases employment opportunities in the community.					
Capacity building empowers people to take leadership roles.					
Capacity building fosters innovation in project implementation.					
Technical training enhances project efficiency.					
Educated stakeholders make better project decisions.					
Empowered communities take ownership of development initiatives.					

In your own opinions, how does the capacity building affect the performance of community empowerment projects in Kiambu County, Kenya?

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**SECTION E: PERFORMANCE OF COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT PROJECTS**




Please rate each of the statements below concerning the performance of community empowerment projects. For all the statements, 5=Strongly Agree, 4=Agree, 3=Neutral, 2=Disagree and 1=Strongly Disagree.

<b>Statement</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>
Public participation improves the success of community empowerment projects.					
Effective participation leads to better project planning and implementation.					
Public participation enhances transparency and accountability in projects.					
Regular consultations with the community improve project impact.					
Inclusive decision-making increases community ownership of projects.					
Community engagement ensures that project resources are used effectively.					
Involvement of diverse stakeholders strengthens project sustainability.					

### APPENDIX III: MAP OF KIAMBU COUNTY



**APPENDIX IV: REASERCH PERMIT (NACOSTI)**

 <p>REPUBLIC OF KENYA</p>	 <p><b>NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY &amp; INNOVATION</b></p>
<p>Ref No: <b>276170</b></p>	<p>Date of Issue: <b>23/April/2024</b></p>
<p><b>RESEARCH LICENSE</b></p>	
	
<p><b>This is to Certify that Ms. Purity Jabor Alina of Kenyatta University, has been licensed to conduct research as per the provision of the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 (Rev.2014) in Kiambu on the topic: Citizen Petition and Participation Act, 2016 on Economic Development in Kiambu County, Kenya for the period ending : 23/April/2025.</b></p>	
<p>License No: <b>NACOSTI/P/24/34996</b></p>	<p>Verification QR Code</p>
<p>Applicant Identification Number</p>	<p>Signature of Director General</p>
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